



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: April 11, 2006

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Contracts For The St. Francis Area Neighborhood Traffic Management Program And The Safe Routes To School Pedestrian Improvements Projects

RECOMMENDATIONS: That Council:

- A. Authorize staff to proceed with the installation of 11 traffic calming devices as part of the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) pedestrian improvements and the St. Francis Area Mobility Plan;
- B. Authorize the Public Works Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Penfield & Smith, in an amount not to exceed \$56,750, for final design of elements of the St. Francis Area Mobility Plan;
- C. Authorize the Public Works Director to approve expenditures up to \$5,675 for extra services performed by Penfield & Smith that may result from necessary changes in the scope of work for the St. Francis Area Mobility Plan;
- D. Authorize the Public Works Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Penfield & Smith, in an amount not to exceed \$49,840, for final design of the SR2S Pedestrian Improvements Project; and
- E. Authorize the Public Works Director to approve expenditures up to \$4,984 for extra services performed by Penfield & Smith that may result from necessary changes in the scope of work for the SR2S Pedestrian Improvements Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report has been prepared as a result of public input received due to the temporary and semi-permanent installation of traffic calming devices through the St. Francis Area

REVIEWED BY: _____ Finance _____ Attorney

Agenda Item No. _____

Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) and the SR2S Pedestrian Improvement Project. The purpose of this report is to provide background information for each program, to briefly describe the trial installations, and to request approval to install the final configuration for these devices. The staff recommendation is based on public input, advice from the Council Ad Hoc Committee on transportation issues, and the recommendations from the Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC). It is felt that the installation of the final configurations will provide the public a better understanding of the traffic calming devices which should enable the devices to operate more efficiently. It is being proposed that Penfield & Smith be selected as the consultant to undertake design of the permanent traffic calming devices and pedestrian improvements.

DISCUSSION:

Background

St. Francis Area NTMP

The St. Francis Area NTMP began in April 2002 as a community-driven project to calm traffic in the St. Francis neighborhood. For the project, the neighborhood was defined as the area bound by Mission Street, Garden Street, Anapamu Street and Alameda Padre Serra. Area residents participated in the program through a series of public meetings and a design charrette. They were kept informed of the program through a dozen public newsletters, totaling 23,000 pieces. Through the process, the neighbors developed the St. Francis Area Mobility Plan to address their traffic and mobility concerns. Attachment 1 shows the St. Francis NTMP area and all of the traffic calming devices that were approved as part of the mobility plan. The St. Francis Area Mobility Plan was adopted by Council in December 2003, after a public hearing at the TCC in November 2003.

Preliminary designs for trial installations of traffic calming devices were developed during spring 2004, and the initial temporary device was installed in September 2004. This mini traffic circle, installed at the intersection of Alta Vista Road and Anapamu Street, brought considerable attention to the program. The device was removed after approximately three weeks because motorists on Anapamu Street were unwilling to yield the right of way to motorists in the circle. The potential existed for a serious collision to occur, so the circle was removed. It will be replaced with bulbouts (intended to assist pedestrians crossing the street by providing greater visibility and safety). Staff was able to gather data and input from motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians which led to adjustments to subsequent planned installations.

Several other traffic calming devices in the plan have been installed throughout the area, some in a temporary configuration and some in a semi-permanent configuration:

Council Agenda Report

Contracts For The St. Francis Area Neighborhood Traffic Management Program And The Safe Routes To School Pedestrian Improvements Projects

April 11, 2006

Page 3

- Olive Street/Valerio Street – mini traffic circle
- Olive Street/Sola Street – mini traffic circle
- Alta Vista Road/Victoria Street – mini traffic circle
- Alta Vista Road/Sola Street – mini traffic circle
- Garden Street/Islay Street – median island and bulbouts
- Garden Street/Arrellaga Street – bulbouts

The selection of these intersections was done systematically. The priorities established by residents were the Garden Street corridor, the Santa Barbara High School area, and Valerio Street. Trials at the above intersections gave residents the opportunity to observe whether or not their concerns were being addressed.

After the trial installations had been installed on Alta Vista Road, a number of people contacted Public Works to voice their concern about speeding on Olive Street and to ask that a traffic calming installation also be installed on their street. Staff installed the planned mini traffic circle at the Olive/Sola Streets intersection not only to address their concerns but also to provide the Fire Department with a traffic calming installation adjacent to a fire station to enable them to review the impact on their operation directly.

The traffic calming devices have been monitored continuously to ensure they have been operating safely. Part of the monitoring process includes discussion with the Santa Barbara Police Department, the Santa Barbara Fire Department, and the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District to ensure the devices do not impede their operations. These organizations have been cooperative and have offered suggestions for improvements. They have also expressed their continuing support for this program.

The installation of the traffic calming devices has generated much public discussion. Many people have offered suggestions to improve the operations, whereas other people merely want the devices removed. Adjustments have been made based on many of the suggestions. Yield compliance and safety have been acceptable at all the installations. The amount of controversy is not an unexpected result of this program since in order to meet its goal of lower residential traffic speeds, behavioral changes are required of drivers who have not necessarily been a part of the project development. In many instances, the complaints that have been submitted are from drivers who do not live within the St. Francis NTMP area.

Many people have offered the comment that the temporary devices and aspects of the semi-permanent devices are not aesthetically pleasing. They feel that the program is not being readily accepted by the public because the devices are unattractive, and seen as confusing to some. To facilitate a better understanding of the devices, to assist Santa Barbara motorists to better understand how to negotiate the devices and to improve the quality of devices for the neighborhood, it is being suggested that the existing devices be implemented in their final configuration.

Council Agenda Report

Contracts For The St. Francis Area Neighborhood Traffic Management Program And The Safe Routes To School Pedestrian Improvements Projects

April 11, 2006

Page 4

Attachment 2 includes three photos which may offer an idea of how the traffic circles could look in a final configuration. The photos are from cities which have many of these traffic control devices in operation. The bulbouts would include similar landscaped features.

The TCC considered this matter on February 23, 2006, and approved the following recommendation in a 3-1 vote:

That the TCC recommend to City Council that the following items be designed and constructed in their final configurations as part of the St. Francis Area NTMP:

1. Olive Street/Valerio Street – mini traffic circle
2. Olive Street/Sola Street – mini traffic circle
3. Alta Vista Road/Anapamu Street – bulbouts
4. Alta Vista Road/Victoria Street – mini traffic circle
5. Alta Vista Road/Sola Street – mini traffic circle
6. Garden Street/Islay Street – median island and bulbouts
7. Garden Street/Arrellaga Street – bulbouts

At that meeting and through later correspondence, several members of the public requested that an additional feature of the Mobility Plan, the mini traffic circle at Garden and Valerio Streets, be constructed as part of this first phase. Staff is not proposing the installation at this location at this time.

The construction of these traffic calming devices is scheduled to begin in summer 2006. The Transportation Division is responsible for the project development and will use grant funds and Streets Capital funds to complete design and construction. Once the final configurations are in place, the Transportation Division will monitor their operation for a few months, and then report the results of the installations, with a recommendation for the implementation of the remainder of the neighborhood mobility plan, to the TCC.

Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Pedestrian Improvements Project

A result of the extensive neighborhood effort in the St. Francis Area NTMP was the identification of community requests for a plan for a bicycle and pedestrian friendly connection between Santa Barbara Junior and Senior High Schools and their surrounding neighborhoods. This connection was compatible with previous requests from Santa Barbara Junior High School and Santa Barbara High School personnel and parents. The SR2S plan included various traffic calming installations and above ground flashing crosswalks to increase bicycle and pedestrian safety and reduce the number of traffic related complaints coming from both the school district and residents in the surrounding neighborhood. Due to the community involvement with the development of the St. Francis Area Mobility Plan, the City was successful in its application for a California SR2S grant. The City was awarded \$450,000 of SR2S funds for design and construction of the project, with a \$50,000 local match required. The proposed scope of work includes construction of

Council Agenda Report

Contracts For The St. Francis Area Neighborhood Traffic Management Program And The Safe Routes To School Pedestrian Improvements Projects

April 11, 2006

Page 5

the bulbouts and traffic circles on Alta Vista Road that are in the St. Francis Area Mobility Plan. The improvements at many of these locations have been field tested for the last several months with temporary structures as previously described in this report. In total, the SR2S project will construct the following safety improvements in these high pedestrian volume locations:

- De La Guerra Street /Quarantina Street - bulbouts
- Canon Perdido Street/Quarantina Street - bulbouts
- Anapamu Street/Alta Vista Road/High School entrance - bulbouts
- Alta Vista Road/Victoria Street - traffic circles
- Alta Vista Road/Sola Street - traffic circles

The project limits for the SR2S project are the intersections listed above in the vicinity of the Santa Barbara Junior High and High School (see Attachment 1) as well as the intersections of Cota Street at Nopal and Quarantina Streets where above ground flashing crosswalks will be installed.

The construction of the proposed SR2S project is scheduled to begin in summer 2006 prior to expiration of funds. The Transportation Division is responsible for the project, and will use SR2S grant funds and Streets Capital funds to complete design and construction.

The devices on Alta Vista Road and Quarantina Street will be constructed under the auspices of the SR2S program and the remaining four installations would be under the auspices of the St. Francis Area NTMP.

Consultant Selection

In February 2006, City staff issued Requests for Proposals for the SR2S Pedestrian Improvements Project and the St. Francis Area NTMP.

A team of City staff discussed the project proposal with the following consultants on the approved list:

- MNS Engineers, Inc.
- Penfield & Smith
- Bengal Engineering
- Flowers & Associates

Proposals were submitted by Penfield & Smith and MNS Engineers. Considering the short project schedule, funding, and unique design requirements, a City staff team evaluated the proposals and negotiated with Penfield & Smith for the project. Services for these projects are required due to the level of previous study on these projects, experience with these types of improvements, and due to the schedule and workload of staff. The scope of work will include design of bulbouts and traffic circles at the previously described intersections, as well as a reference to the two locations that will

Council Agenda Report

Contracts For The St. Francis Area Neighborhood Traffic Management Program
And The Safe Routes To School Pedestrian Improvements Projects

April 11, 2006

Page 6

include solar-powered, pedestrian-activated, crossing devices at Nopal/Cota Streets and Quarantina/Cota Streets.

~~Penfield & Smith prepared a schedule of six weeks to take the projects through final design. City Staff has taken the projects to the TCC to demonstrate its consistency with the goals of the Circulation Element. These improvements are anticipated to receive a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemption. The City Surveyor's crew is in the process of completing topographic work needed for this work. Penfield & Smith will begin design as soon as the contract is awarded and survey data is complete.~~

Funding

The SR2S Pedestrian Improvements project includes \$450,000 SR2S and \$50,000 Transportation Development Act funds for design and construction, for a total of \$500,000 which can only be used for this project as identified in the grant application.

The St. Francis Area NTMP project has \$300,000 available in the Streets Capital Improvement budget for these improvements. Staff does not have a firm final cost for the construction of the improvements identified in this report, but will only install those traffic calming devices that are within the established budget.

Summary

Staff concurs with the TCC recommendation to move forward with the permanent installation of the traffic calming devices identified in this report, and recommends retaining the services of Penfield & Smith to provide design services for the St. Francis Area Mobility Plan and the SR2S projects.

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Vicinity Map
2. Photos of Permanent Traffic Circle Examples

PREPARED BY: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager/avb

SUBMITTED BY: Anthony J. Nisich, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office